

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

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EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE  
WINTHROP, IOWA

## SUMMER BIRD STUDY

By MYRLE L. JONES

Waubesaie State Park  
Hamburg, Iowa

No man or boy with rod or gun could derive more enjoyment from his pursuit than the bird fan from his. And what a difference biologically! The bird fan brings about no need for a re-stocking program and no license is required of him for hunting with field glass or camera. (The writer is still barbaric enough to shoot his share of pheasants. He has never missed an open season in Iowa.)

## KEEP IT A HOBBY

If your bird observations and records serve as a recreation, then you can continue to enjoy your hobby; but if it develops into a routine of hard hot trips afield and laborious book work, it is time to develop a new hobby, or at least revise your plan of attack.

## SUMMER BIRD STUDY VS. CHRISTMAS CENSUS

In our pursuit of summer birds our viewpoint will be vastly different from that of the Christmas census hike or from our field day at the Iowa Ornithologists' Union meeting, for here we shall not be seriously concerned about numbers since we are dealing now with birds which have moved in for the summer. It is not a case of see them now or never (or wait a year). We strive rather to spy shamefully upon their household activities and learn as much as possible about a few species rather than attempt to find great numbers of species. We may visit one particular habitat every spare hour for weeks rather than run hither and yon as is our habit during migration studies.

## OBSERVATIONS AT HOME

For most of us it is difficult to conceive of a more ideal opportunity to watch birds than at the bird-bath if it is conveniently arranged so that we may watch while we go about our work in our study, library, bedroom or kitchen, and especially while we are eating our meals. This insures many hours with interesting and responsive neighbors. Many of us will make observations in this manner whereas we would not take time for more highly organized trips into the fields.

## THE BIRD BLIND

Surely everyone owes it to himself to spend at least a few forenoons in a bird blind. Such a blind need not be elaborate. Its construction may involve burlap bags which have been opened flat (a few holes add to its usefulness), mosquito netting, muslin, or even cheesecloth; any one or several of which may be draped over an old umbrella or wired permanently, tepee-fashion, to a few poles.

Place such a blind near a bird-bath in your most cherished birding territory and you have an ideal opportunity to observe and listen. If you say this would take too much time, you are mistaken, for it is well worth all the time it takes. Plan your work this summer for such a treat, if you have not already done so. If you still doubt, ask yourself, "Am I running things, or are things running me?"

## DO IT THE EASY WAY

Watching birds from a blind need not involve fighting insect pests and sitting on a milk stool all day long. Provide yourself with a comfortable seat even though it be crude; dress comfortably but sensibly; take along a cool drink, a good book or magazine. Then, if the birds do not oblige, you still may enjoy a few hours profitably. As a rule, however, you will forget all about your book or the letter you may have thought you would write to a friend, and instead be kept so busy that a lunch would have proved a wiser burden than the book.

## NOTES AND MEDITATIONS

A typical half day in the field might be more clearly suggested by

notes taken on a recent field trip than by any outline of itemized suggestions or further explanations.

The field trip which follows was planned as a result of auditory evidence of the Yellow-breasted Chat in this particular area of Waubonsie State Park. The Chat uttered its characteristic notes very sparingly as a fence-building crew worked in the vicinity a few days previous.

FIELD NOTES. MAY 18, 1942. I had scarcely found a comfortable place under a canopy of sumac from which to watch before an Indigo Bunting perched in a dead oak not a dozen feet away. He sang to me in nearby trees for the next half hour, although he seemed more concerned about the food problem than about the invader.

A Tanager flew overhead. Which kind? (Summer Tanagers are fairly common at Waubonsie). Never mind that, it went so fast I couldn't tell but it will be back, perhaps not today, but some other day. No use chasing him.

Good thing I didn't for now I hear both the Chat and the Bell's Vireo quite near. Let them hunt me up. I know who they are. I am more curious than they, but they don't need to know it.

A Buzzard flies lazily overhead where I can watch him with my glass for a minute. I wonder where he is nesting? The Red-eyed Vireo and Wood Thrush sing farther down in the more dense woodlands.

This 25 acres of State Park woodland is an ideal place for the Yellow-breasted Chat. Even last fall it had impressed me and I promised myself that I would come out here in the spring to listen for Chats. It is a recently acquired area and has not yet passed from the brushy stage of the cut-over timber area. Two broad hollows slope to the east, ending in deeper woodlands among large elms and a few cottonwoods and now and then a great oak which was no doubt too difficult to cut or too crooked. At the upper end they pass into upland prairies.

It is in this borderland area composed of dogwood, hazel, coral berry and sumac that the Chat, Indigo Bunting, Bell's Vireo and Yellow-throat find suitable environment. The old stumps bristle with sprouts where oaks and hickories have been removed. Now and then we find an isolated walnut or linden.

As I write some bird flies to the top of that dead tree 100 yards away—about Cowbird size. I hear a Catbird. It may be that. When a-birding never let work (the taking of notes) interfere with your observations. There! What a look! It is my Chat. And now he sings, then takes to the air in that crazy, jumpy flight. Does he crave attention like a small child? He sings for several minutes, drowning out the Indigo Bunting which still sings lazily; also the Bell's Vireo which spits out his song as though it were just so many notes to be disposed of in the shortest possible time. There he is back where I saw him first. It was lucky for me that I concealed my curiosity for he probably would have ducked for cover if I had gone in search of him when I heard his first notes.

A pair of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds dart swiftly overhead and the Indigo Bunting sings on and on. There, the Bell's Vireo comes closer again. I haven't seen him but what does it matter. Didn't I listen to that song almost daily for two months in 1938 and tried my best to identify the singer? But not once in hours and hours of hunting did I actually see him. Now I'll be independent for, after all, he isn't so handsome. Now he sings not a rod away but all one sees is a little streak as he darts through the sumac, then resumes his musical efforts some distance away.

A Yellow-throated Vireo hesitates but for a moment in my walnut tree; the only tall live tree within a hundred yards. Perhaps the Indigo cleaned the insect pests from this tree, or possibly walnut trees are not good hunting grounds until later in the season.

How much more enjoyable was lunch when I was given fifteen minutes entertainment by the Chat rather than by some electrical transcription. Not everyone can enjoy Chat music at lunch but many are entertained at breakfast by the Brown Thrasher, Catbird, Cardinal and many another grandstand performer.

A small hawk comes swiftly into my hollow causing a deathly stillness among the birds. Not until several minutes after its passing do the birds resume activity. First to appear are the flycatchers. Are they such capable fliers that they have little or no fear of the small swift hawks?

Even as I passed from the south to the north side of the area a Chat launched out from the tall trees bordering a likely Chat habitat. Though the sun indicated that the hottest part of the day was just under way, the Chat went through that crazy jerky flight and gave the usual ridiculous notes.

#### CONCENTRATION VS. AIMLESS HIKES

Each individual must decide for himself whether to concentrate on a favorite territory or to ramble as the spirit moves. The latter desire should be fairly well satisfied by following the spring migration. Now that the nesting birds serve to localize species and even individual pairs more than at any other season, it would seem logical to bend our efforts toward a really thorough knowledge about a few families.

#### BREEDING BIRD CENSUS

If you care to keep systematic records regarding your bird watching you might be interested in 'Audubon Magazine's' Breeding Bird Census. Much interesting and valuable information is being accumulated through co-operation of ornithologists throughout the United States who keep such complete records of a given area over a period of years. Instructions for taking the census are given each year in 'Audubon Magazine'. Consult recent issues for this information.

## CHARTING THE FUTURE THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

By MARTIN L. GRANT

President, Iowa Ornithologists' Union



DR. GRANT

The Editor tells me the new President is expected to write an open letter to the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, so here it is. I am, of course, highly honored by the trust and responsibility involved in my new office, and will do my best to advance the cause of bird study and the interests of the members to the extent of my limited capabilities. We have just completed an instructive and entertaining series of meetings at our convention, for which we have the Waterloo Audubon Club to thank, as well as the past officers of the Union, who have so efficiently managed the affairs of the organization for varying periods of time. May the good work keep up.

Since this is my first appearance in these pages, perhaps a note of introduction may not be amiss. My own interest in birds can be dated very accurately. At the age of 13 I noticed a woodpecker in the act of climbing a tree—a small bird that appeared to be striped with black and white all over. Search through several bird books failed to disclose any such animal, and I felt certain, of course, that I had discovered a new species. This was a startling introduction to ornithology, my very first observation being of a form

unknown to science! To make a long story short, eventually I decided that since the woodpecker was pressed against the tree trunk, possibly I hadn't seen his lower surface after all, and he might have been of some other color underneath, rather than black and white striped as he was on top. In fact, maybe he was a Downy Woodpecker, and wasn't a new species after all. By that time, however, I had looked through so many bird books that a permanent interest in the subject had developed.

The first professional with whom I came in contact was Lynds Jones, who had attended Grinnell College here in Iowa, and who was editor of the 'Wilson Bulletin' for over 30 years. I took a course from him at Oberlin College, and at the age of 18 became one of his laboratory assistants in ornithology.

For many years I kept a complete estimate of the numbers of birds of each species seen each day of the year, but other interests and hobbies diverted me eventually. I have never gotten around to compiling a Life-list, but my field records show that for one six-months period, spent mainly in travelling throughout the United States, a total of 661 species and subspecies of birds were observed.

Enough of autobiography, however, and let's look seriously at the situation the Iowa Ornithologists' Union is facing. I do not need to call attention to the present world situation, and how the rationing of cars, tires, gas, etc., can affect our activities. Fortunately, bird study is an activity which, while aided by transportation facilities, can be carried on entirely on foot if need be. Except for vast stretches of the open ocean, I have never been in a region where some birds could not be found, by which I mean merely that each locality furnishes almost unlimited opportunity for serious studies in ornithology. Some of the most fundamental research of recent years, such as the work of Kendeigh, Nice, and others, has been done in ordinary environments of the type that make up most of the state of Iowa. If our travelling facilities become impaired, then, let us make use of what materials we have available. Even if all transportation should stop, we still have, fortunately, 'Iowa Bird Life' for intercommunication. Make use of it, send in your observations and articles so others may share your experiences.

The less chance we have to visit each other, the more we can do locally with organized bird groups. Now is certainly the time to form and develop bird clubs in all communities. Our Union can function more effectively if it represents a larger share of the population. Let us all try to get new members, and increase our usefulness.

At present I do not feel enough of a prognosticator to venture an assertion as to whether it will be possible or advisable to hold a convention in 1943. Certainly I hope so, and I suspect it will depend not so much on the international and domestic situation as on the interests of the members of the Union. No definite suggestions as to place have been made, so if you have anything to offer, send it in.

The Union's 'Check-list' in the printed card form is to be revised soon. Any suggestions as to birds to be omitted or added, or as to changes in format will be gratefully received. At the Waterloo convention the following additions were suggested: Little Blue Heron, American Egret, Prairie Falcon, Hungarian Partridge, Pileated Woodpecker, Magpie, Kentucky Warbler, and Blue Grosbeak, also the addition of the names of various groups, such as ducks.

I should not need to remind those who have not done so to pay their dues to Miss Lillian Serbousek, the Secretary-Treasurer. If any members feel the urge to lend more active financial support to the Union, I might suggest sending \$3.50 to the Editor, as that is the approximate amount required to have a cut made for a photographic illustration in the magazine.

A good year is ahead of us, if we wish to make it so.

## A REPORT ON THE WATERLOO CONVENTION

By LILLIAN SERBOUSEK  
Sec'y-Treas., Iowa Ornithologists' Union

The twentieth annual meeting of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union was held on Saturday and Sunday, May 9 and 10, 1942, at Waterloo, Iowa. All the Saturday sessions were held in the Gold Room of the President Hotel. The program opened with an address of welcome by Mrs. John Barlow, President of the Waterloo Audubon Club. Dr. W. N. Keck gave the response.



MISS LILLIAN SERBOUSEK  
Secretary-Treasurer  
(From a photograph taken in May, 1942)

"The Forum", which is usually the last number of the afternoon session, was first this year, with Dr. F. L. R. Roberts acting as leader. The subject was "Good Birding Areas in Iowa". Dr. Roberts asked for locations of nesting colonies of Cliff Swallows, and the following were reported: two colonies in the Sioux City region; several hundred nests on a barn near Amana; about 200 nests in Winneshiek County. In discussing nesting of the Black-crowned Night Heron, 500 nests were reported near Ruthven, 200 nests north of Waterloo, and smaller nestings in eastern Iowa. Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported in various numbers at New Lake south of Sioux City, at Independence, Waterloo, Clear Lake and Spirit Lake. It was mentioned that Wright County might be considered the dividing line for the Yellow-head—the birds being numerous in counties west of Wright County and decreasing in numbers east of

it. The White Pelican was also discussed on "The Forum", as were Bluebirds and Starlings, which had been observed in most parts of the state.

Miss Margaret Kohlman, of Dubuque, in her talk on "Activities of a Junior Audubon Club in Elementary Grades", told of the progress made by the members. She explained its organization, the nature of the meetings, and read the club's song. She showed samples of bird puzzles and the Audubon leaflets received by each member. Miss Margaret Murley, of the Webster City schools, followed with a "Junior Audubon Report". She said that at first no formal meetings were held by her Junior Audubon Club, the members studying in the field. Miss Murley displayed charts and maps made by the students in their study of birds.

Since Bruce F. Stiles was unable to be present, his paper on "Conservation in Southwest Iowa" was read by Harry Rector, Conservation Officer of Buchanan and Benton Counties. This was illustrated by a lengthy series of slides showing various phases of conservation work, and Mr. Rector spoke briefly on his own conservation work in eastern Iowa.

The last number of the morning session was given by Mrs. Mary L. Bailey of Sioux City on "Some European Birds I Learned to Identify." In 1929, on her first trip to Europe, Mrs. Bailey identified 52 species. Returning in 1932-1933, she added 13 species, making a total of 65. She compared them with American birds and told interesting facts about them.

Before adjournment the President appointed the following committees: Nominating, Dr. Mary Roberts (Chairman), Miss Esther Copp, Mrs. R. W. Johnson; Auditing, R. W. Johnson (Chairman), Dr. F. L. R. Roberts, Miss R. Lucile Loban; Resolutions, Dr. Martin Grant (Chairman), Mrs. Mary L. Bailey, J. Wilbur Dole.

Dr. Mary Roberts of Spirit Lake opened the afternoon program with a "Memorial to Walter Rosene", who had been a Charter Member of the Union and one of the most active and loyal members, and whose passing is a great loss to the organization. Dr. Roberts also mentioned the deaths of J. H. Holck of Spirit Lake, Fred H. Hall of Ottumwa, both Charter Members of the Union, Carl Fritz Henning of the Ledges State Park, and her father, Charles W. Price of Spirit Lake.

J. Wilbur Dole, Fairfield, followed with an illustrated talk on "The Origin and Evolution of Birds". Mr. Dole used slides to show that birds evolved from reptiles and he discussed the Archaeopteryx, Hesperornis and Ichthyornis.

"Experimental Studies on Juvenile Herring Gulls" was discussed by Willis Boss, of the University of Iowa. Injecting gulls' eggs with hormones caused the young birds to have adult plumage which they ordinarily do not acquire for three years. The young birds were adult also in their voices, courtship behavior, and calls, and did much fighting.

Dr. Robert Vane, Cedar Rapids, who was scheduled to show his "Movies of Unusual Birds", left for service in the United States Navy on that day. Since he could not be present, his pictures were not shown.

Richard Trump, of Keokuk, explained "Some Problems of Bird Behavior in Relation to the Weather". He urged members to include the direction and velocity of the wind in their bird records.

To show and tell about "Pathways through the Ether", Charles C. Ayres, Jr., Ottumwa, used electrically lighted maps of his own construction. The birds' summer and winter homes and migration routes were lighted in different colors on these very ingenious maps.

At the close of the afternoon program the business meeting was opened by President Keck. The report of the 1941 meeting was read and accepted. Dr. F. L. R. Roberts then presented the new constitution of the Union. Discussion followed, and several motions were made and seconded to reword and change parts of it, and to send a copy of the proposed constitution in its final form to the officers and Executive Council for approval. The report of the Nominating Committee was given, and a motion was made and seconded that this report be accepted and the officers elected as named (these new officers are given on the title page of this issue). This was followed by the annual report of the Secretary-Treasurer. Several bills were submitted and the claims allowed. The business meeting was adjourned.

The annual Ornithologists' Banquet was held at 6:30 p. m. in the Gold Room of the President Hotel, with Dr. Martin L. Grant of Iowa State Teachers College acting as toastmaster. Group singing was led by Miss Helen Psaros, accompanied by Miss Shirley Hauser, after which Miss Psaros sang two solos. Dr. Roy L. Abbott of the Biology Department of Iowa State Teachers College was the speaker of the evening. In his address, "I Write for Fun", he stated that nature, including birds, gave him the inspiration for his writings. He read three papers that he had written for fun and for which he had received payment from magazines.

Three field trips were scheduled for Sunday morning, May 10. Two groups started at 6 a. m., the other at 6:30. All returned to the Hartman Forest Reserve for one o'clock luncheon. The combined groups observed a total of 139 species. At this luncheon further business matters were brought up and acted upon. A report by the Auditing Committee was read and accepted. The question of the compilation of the state bird list was explained by Dr. F. L. R. Roberts. After some discussion it was decided that members bring their 1942 records to the next meeting to use in compiling the state list. Dr. Keck, elected to the newly-created office of Librarian, is to include among his duties that of keeping the records of the state bird list. Dr. Grant read the report of the Resolutions Committee at this time. Another committee, a Legislative Committee, was appointed by the President; Dr. George Hendrickson was appointed Chairman, with Jack Musgrove and Charles Ayres, Jr. as the other two members. The duties of this committee are to watch legislation regarding birds and feather traffic in particular. A motion was made for adjournment, good-byes were said, and another successful convention became history.

**Resolutions.**—WHEREAS, we, the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, assembled in convention at Waterloo, May 10, 1942, have enjoyed very much our stay here, therefore, be it resolved that we extend to the Waterloo Audubon Club our hearty appreciation of their kindness and courtesy. We wish to thank not only this organization, but also all who assisted in making the meeting such a pleasant one.

Be it further resolved that we extend our sincere thanks and deep appreciation—first, to the officers of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union for the services which they have officially rendered and for their untiring efforts in making this meeting a success; second, to Mr. Pierce for the efficient manner in which he has edited 'Iowa Bird Life'; and third, to Dr. Roy L. Abbott of Cedar Falls for the scholarly and humorous address which he gave at the banquet.

And finally, be it resolved that the Secretary be instructed to request the appropriate Federal Congressmen that the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior be adequately staffed to take proper care of our wildlife resources which have showed marked gains under the present competent administration.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) The Resolutions Committee,  
Martin L. Grant, Chairman,  
Mary L. Bailey,  
J. Wilbur Dole.

**Attendance Register.**—AMES, Dr. and Mrs. G. O. Hendrickson; ATLANTIC, Don Bice, Bob Mallette, Eugene Ruhr, Chas. C. Ruhr; CEDAR FALLS, Dr. Roy L. Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. John Bliese, Mrs. C. F. Chapin, Frances Crouter, Mrs. Lola Deal, Mrs. Ray S. Dix, Eleanor Eifert, Mrs. Burness Eiler, Dr. and Mrs. M. L. Grant, Dr. C. W. Lantz, Mrs. Florence Lowe, Joy Parry, Mrs. Eugene Smith, Mrs. Bertha Stockdale, Mrs. Warren Tay, Mrs. Vernon Ulrich; CEDAR RAPIDS, C. Esther Copp, Isabel Hayman, Dr. W. N. Keck, Dr. A. W. Meyer, Lillian Serbousek, Emily Steffen, Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Steffen; DUBUQUE, Lyle Bradley, Clifford Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Johnson, Margaret Kohlman, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Ruegnitz, Ival Schuster, Jack Tupper, Mary Young; DYSART, Ruby G. McCarthy; FAIRFIELD, J. Wilbur Dole, John Goodman, Malcolm McDonald, John Pollock; GRINNELL, Dorothy Thompson; INDEPENDENCE, Harry E. Rector; IOWA CITY, Willis Boss; IOWA FALLS, Mrs. Len Myers; KEOKUK, Calvin Kentfield, Richard Trump; MT. PLEASANT, Mr. and Mrs. N. L. Cuthbert; OTTUMWA, Chas. C. Ayres, Jr.; SIOUX CITY, Mrs. Mary Bailey, Jean



Laffoon; SPIRIT LAKE, Dr. and Mrs. F. L. R. Roberts; WATERLOO, Mabel Bailey, Mabel M. Barlow, Lola Barnhart, Pauline Bassarear, Myrle M. Burk, Wanda Daum, Geo. O. Faulkner, Mrs. Ivy Fisher, Mabel Grupp, Salina Hantelmann, Shirley Hauser, Mardelle Holley, John C. Jago, R. Lucile Loban, Myra Loban, Lillian Maxwell, Maude Michael, Hilda Miller, Carrie L. Neidy, Harvey Nichols, Helen Psaros, Pearl Rader, Evan Sage, Rosella Smidt, Barbara Spiegel, Mrs. Arch Stout, Mrs. John Uban, Leila Untiedt, Wanda Wilharm, Katherine Young; WEBSTER CITY, Margaret Murley; WINTHROP, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Pierce, Mrs. J. M. Pierce. Total registered, 94.

**Birds Seen on the Field Trip.**—Various localities in the Waterloo region, covered by three groups of observers, May 10, 1942; 6 a. m. to 12 noon (Central war time).

Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue and Green Herons, Am. Bittern, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Shoveller, Canvasback, Scaup, Sharp-shinned, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Broad-winged, Marsh and Sparrow Hawks, Osprey, Bob-white, Ring-necked Pheasant, Virginia and Sora Rails, Am. Coot, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted, Solitary, Pectoral and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Greater and Lesser Yellow-legs, Wilson's Phalarope, Forster's and Black Terns, Mourning Dove, Barred Owl, Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-thr. Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Flicker, Red-bellied, Red-headed, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Eastern Kingbird, Phoebe, Wood Pewee, Crested, \*Yellow-bellied, \*Acadian, Alder, Least and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Prairie Horned Lark, Tree, Bank, Rough-winged, Barn and Cliff Swallows, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, House, Carolina, Prairie Marsh and Short-billed Marsh Wrens, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood, Olive-backed, Gray-cheeked and \*Willow Thrushes, Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Migrant Shrike, Starling, Bell's, Yellow-throated, Blue-headed, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Black and White, Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Tenn., Orange-crowned, Nashville, Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Cape May, Myrtle, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Palm, Connecticut, Mourning, Wilson's and Canada Warblers, Oven-bird, Grinnell's and Louisiana Water-thrushes, Northern Yellow-throat, Am. Redstart, Bobolink, Eastern and Western Meadowlarks, Red-winged and \*Rusty Blackbirds, Baltimore Oriole, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Purple Finch, Goldfinch, Red-eyed Towhee, English, Savannah, Grasshopper, Vesper, Lark, Chipping, Clay-colored, Field, Harris's, White-crowned, White-throated, Lincoln's, Swamp and Song Sparrows. Total, 139 species. (Those marked with the asterisk should have had accompanying details or the observer's name.—Ed.)

### GENERAL NOTES

**A Thought on Bird Day.**—March 21 is the date our state legislature has designated as Bird Day in Iowa. This date is too early and I should like to see it changed to the second Friday in April, which is the official Bird Day in many states. I think this day should come in April because it is more of bird month when wild birds are coming in flocks from the south. We should then urge the celebrating of Bird Day during their return from the southland, as a time to recall that our song and insectivorous birds are the best friends and allies of farmers because they destroy billions of destructive insects and their eggs. The human race is in another merciless war—with the insect world for the possession of the earth, and in this war the birds are on our side. The birds have their troubles, too, and need our help. So let's help to "keep 'em singing."—MRS. P. J. KLINKER, Denison, Iowa.

**Late Spring Migrants in Black Hawk County, an Aftermath of the 1942 Convention.**—On May 17, just a week after the Waterloo convention, an all-day field trip was taken by six members of the Waterloo and Cedar Falls Audubon Clubs, who covered almost exactly the same ground as the convention trips of the previous week. It rained a large part of the day, but, while many of the earlier migrants were no longer to be found, a total of 106 species were observed. The following nine species seen had not been reported on the convention field trips: Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, King Rail, Least Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Cedar Waxwing, Black-poll Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat.—MARTIN L. GRANT, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

**Observations in Northwest Iowa.**—While visiting at Spirit Lake over the Christmas holiday season, 1941, I had opportunity to spend three days in the field. Bird life as a whole was scarce in that area, although the population of Ring-necked Pheasants was very large, 1000 or more being seen each day in the field. Most of them were confined to heavy marsh grass in protected areas. The population of Hungarian Partridges was low, and not more than a dozen were seen over a period of three days. On December 28, about a mile and a half north of Lake Park, Iowa, I located a flock of 150 Prairie Chickens, probably migrant birds from Minnesota or Dakota. About 50,000 Mallards stayed on West Lake Okoboji until it froze on December 27, when the greater portion of them left. The 1941 duck season brought an increase of a few of our rare species of ducks. In Dickinson County (and also in Louisa County) many more Buffle-heads were seen than in ordinary years, and there was a great increase in Black Ducks. During the early part of October Black Ducks were very numerous, and specimens taken proved to be the Red-legged Black Duck. The number diminished toward the latter part of the season, however, and the specimens were much smaller and lighter in color, and may prove to be the American Black Duck. One Surf Scoter was taken at Storm Lake, Iowa, and many more were noted in that area.—JACK W. MUSGROVE, Iowa State Dept. of History and Archives, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Bird House Contest Sponsored by Quail Club.**—A very worth-while contest was sponsored by the Davis County (Iowa) Quail Club. I believe it represents one of the very first occasions where a group of hunters and sportsmen, such as comprise the Davis County club, have gotten together to back a project for the protection of our song birds in this part of the middle west. They are very much to be commended, and I was proud that they called on me to talk to the schools and to furnish data. The contest ended late in March and consisted of three sections: (1) bird house building, (2) bird feeder building, and (3) essay contest. Three types of houses were specified, for House Wren, Purple Martin and Bluebird, with four prizes (paid in defense stamps) given each class. The 12 prize-winning houses became the property of the Quail Club, to be sold at public auction with the proceeds donated to the American Red Cross. There were two types of feeders in the bird feeder contest, and three prizes in defense stamps. Two classes entered the essay contest, high school and grade school students, and two subjects were available: "Value of the song bird", and "Value of the game bird". Essays were limited to 200 words, and four prizes were given.

The contest was county-wide. I talked to schools in Bloomfield, Troy and Pulaski on the migration of birds, to help the opening of the contest. At the time of the spring migration of birds my law business suffers considerably due to the talks which I am called upon to make to student groups and clubs. I made nine talks during one period of three weeks.—CHARLES C. AYRES, JR., Ottumwa, Iowa.

**Pelicans on Trumbull Lake.**—A large concentration of White Pelicans was observed on Trumbull Lake, Clay County, Iowa, during the week of April 19-25, 1942, and reported to the State Conservation Commission. Almost 1300 of the big white birds stopped on their northern migration to do a little fishing. Pelicans at rest are not one of Mother Nature's most beautiful children, but on the wing their grace is unsurpassed by any other bird. With their immense wing-spread, eight to nine feet, a flight of pelicans gives the impression of a squadron of flying fortresses.—JAMES R. HARLAN, State Conservation Commission, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Red-breasted Nuthatches at Atlantic.**—On December 15, 1938, we had three Red-breasted Nuthatches come and stay with us until the first week of March, 1939. During the past winter they came on November 13, 1941, two of them, and stayed until March 15, 1942. They were not here during the two winters between 1939 and last winter. The bird books say that they are very shy, but we found them unusually tame, eating away unconcernedly with us looking at them through the window right beside the feeding tray.—A. A. EMIGH, Atlantic, Iowa.

**A New Check-list for Wisconsin.**—The Wisconsin Society of Ornithology has published a very useful pocket-size check-list of Wisconsin birds, in which are listed 366 different birds. Of this number 228 are breeding birds. The booklet is neatly put up and contains 32 pages with a short bibliography. The status of every species is indicated and a chart shows the time of its migration, the length of its stay as a summer resident or otherwise, and when it may be looked for during the year; there is also a brief statement as to whether it is a transient, summer resident, or winter visitor. On every alternate page there are columns for the observer to insert his own records of the species listed on the opposite page. Copies of this list of birds of our neighboring state are sold for 25c and may be obtained from Earl L. Loyster, of the Wisconsin Conservation Dept., State Office Bldg., Madison, Wis.—F. J. P.

**Frustrated Mallard Drake Destroys a Nest.**—June 29, 1940, 7 p.m., we sat on a bank of Lake La Verne, Iowa State College campus, and watched the Mallard ducks, originally of wild stock. This small flock contained eight males and two females. On the opposite bank a group of three males and one female were resting and preening by a clump of bushes near which the female had a nest with nine eggs. Previously we had noticed this female duck; she was easily identified because she waddled with a decided limp of an injured leg. We had noticed also that three males were always very close and attentive to this female, following her about and driving away other ducks that came near her.

On this occasion a lone strange male Mallard swam across the lake and started to climb the bank toward the group of four. As soon as the three drakes saw him, they waddled down the bank and drove the intruder into the water. This happened three or four times as one or all three drove the intruder back into the water each time he tried to climb up the bank. Finally, the interloper elected to remain in the water, but quacking he swam along the shore line as near as he could get to the female. After a time the original group went over the bank and down the other side to a by-pass stream. As soon as they were out of sight, the lone male climbed up the bank, went directly to the nest in the bushes, and rolled all nine eggs down the bank.—JACK MAC CURDY and GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON, Dept. of Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

**Pheasants Drown in Lake.**—One of the natural hazards of wildlife that is rather uncommon is accidental drowning. Upland game birds are not long-range fliers, and this fact is brought to mind by a wildlife tragedy at Lake Okoboji in the spring of 1942, when a flock of 12 Ring-necked Pheasants attempted to fly across that lake. The birds were able to negotiate only a portion of the distance before they became exhausted and dropped into the water.—JAMES R. HARLAN, State Conservation Commission, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Eastern Nighthawk Stomach Contents.**—In each of the months of July and August, 1940, an accidentally killed Eastern Nighthawk was brought to me. The stomach of the first contained the recognizable remains of 10 cutworm moths, and 129 "flying" ants. The stomach of the second had recognizable remains of 57 ground beetles, 4 June beetles, 1 stink bug, and 155 "flying" ants.—GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON, Dept. of Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

**A Cape May Warbler at Close Range.**—Max von Schrader, a banker in this city, heard something bump against his window in May, 1941. Upon investigation he found a small bird lying on the ground outside, and he brought it in to examine it and to determine its identity. The bird was alive, though stunned. After contacting me it was identified as a Cape May Warbler. It soon revived and Mr. von Schrader set it on the back of a chair; then it flew away. As I told him, it is very seldom that one has the opportunity to identify a live warbler of that species by holding the bird in one hand and a bird book in the other! —CHARLES C. AYRES, JR., Ottumwa, Iowa.

**Greater Scaup Duck and Cinnamon Teal in Western Iowa.**—On October 20, 1941, E. H. Brown of Council Bluffs shot a Greater Scaup Duck (*Nyroca marila*). I was there at the time, and he was kind enough to give it to me. It has been made into a skin and is now in the study collection of bird skins in the Department of Biology at Morningside College. The bird was killed near the northeast shore of Lake Manawa in Lewis Township, Pottawattamie County, Iowa. Its measurements in inches and decimal fractions are as follows: Wings extended, 31.25; wing, 8.63; length, 18.25; exposed culmen, 2.18; tail, 2.75; tarsus, 1.88; width of bill, 1.09; length of bill nail, .44; width of nail, .28; height of bill at base, 1.00. Gloss of the head was greenish; the white of the speculum extended through the first seven primaries and shaded into brown in the eighth primary. The bird is a male.

DuMont was able to find but one Iowa specimen of the Greater Scaup, a female in the Coe College collection taken by A. M. Bailey in Johnson County, on November 15, 1911. He considered it a rare migrant. I would class it as an "uncommon migrant", as I believe it is taken occasionally each year by hunters who do not differentiate between it and *affinis*. Bird students do not record it as they are not in the field much at this time of year, and when they do see it they are not able to separate it from *affinis*, as they see it at a distance on the water or in flight.

On October 16, 1941, A. S. Workman of Glenwood, Iowa, told me that he had killed a Cinnamon Teal (*Querquedula cyanoptera*) that day on Folsom Lake, in St. Mary's Township, Mills County, Iowa. I did not see the bird, but Mr. Workman, who is a member of the State Conservation Commission of Iowa, is an experienced hunter and a reliable observer. The bird was not preserved.—BRUCE F. STILES, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Shorebirds in Dickinson County.**—The following observations were made in Dickinson County, Iowa, May 15 to 20 inclusive, 1942. This was the first year that I have observed numbers of Stilt Sandpipers. The first one was noted on May 18 in the vicinity of Stony Lake. I was very happy to see this bird as it had been a rarity in my past experience. Within the next half hour I saw flocks of from 20 to 30 Stilt Sandpipers. On all the following days they were seen in small flocks, mixed with other shorebirds such as Lesser Yellow-legs, Wilson's Phalarope, Semipalmated Sandpiper and Dowitcher. They appeared to be one of the most numerous birds in the locality at that time. Any small pond or wet place in the field would have a number of them on it. More Hudsonian Godwits were observed during those days in Dickinson County than I had believed would be found in the whole migration. Flocks of from 3 to 13 were observed each day. Probably more Hudsonian Godwits were seen than any other shorebirds except Stilt Sandpipers. Other birds observed were Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Golden Plover (which numbered into the hundreds), and the Sanderling. The last named bird was very common on almost any sandy beach on the larger lakes.—JACK W. MUSGROVE, Iowa State Dept. of History and Archives, Des Moines, Iowa.

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- Baskett, Thomas S. Production of Pheasants in North-Central Iowa in 1939; Jour. Wildlife Management, 5 (2), 1941: 168-174.
- Cooke, May Thatcher. Returns from Banded Birds: Recoveries of Some Banded Birds of Prey; Bird-Banding, 12 (4), 1941: 150-160 (Iowa records, 153, 155).
- Dill, Homer R. Ruff in Iowa in Spring; Auk, 58 (2), 1941: 257.
- Errington, Paul L. An Eight-winter Study of Central Iowa Bobwhites; Wilson Bull., 53 (2), 1941: 85-102.
- Haecker, Frederick W. Two Interesting 1940 Bird Records from the Missouri River Bottoms; Nebr. Bird Review, 9 (1), 1941: 17.
- 'Iowa Bird Life'. 42 articles referring to Iowa birds in Vol. 11.
- Kendeigh, S. Charles. Birds of a Prairie Community; Condor, 43 (4), 1941: 165-174.
- Laffoon, Jean. Late Fall and Winter Bird Records, 1938 to 1941, in the Sioux City Area; Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., 48, 1941: 425-436.
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- Musgrove, Jack. Game Birds of the Past: The Ruffed Grouse; Iowa Sportsman, 1 (8), 1941: 7. The Prairie Chicken; Iowa Sportsman, 1 (9), 1941: 8, 15. The Wild Turkey; Midwest Sportsman, 2, (1), 1941: 8, 21.
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- Scott, Thos. G. Feeding by Turkey Vultures at Dens of the Northern Plains Red Fox; Ecology, 22 (2), 1941: 211-212.
- Stiles, Bruce F. Lead Poisoning in Ducks of Southwestern Iowa during the Winter of 1938-39; Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., 47, 1940: 397-399 (issued in 1941).

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U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Bird Migration Memorandum No. 7; June 16, 1941: 1-65.

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—F. J. P.

**Another Record of the Lark Bunting in Woodbury County.**—On June 7, 1942, about 8:45 p.m., Mrs. John V. Madison telephoned me that they had in their yard a strange black bird with white in the wing. I went over and found a Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) in the top, dead branches of a cherry tree. I watched the bird in good light for at least five minutes, at a distance of 25 feet and with a 6-power prism glass. It had been under observation for about half an hour before that, part of the time hopping over the lawn apparently picking up insects. During my observation the bird was surprisingly inactive; but it did hop or fly around a little within a radius of two or three feet. I thought it might be settling to roost for the night; but presently a Blue Jay flew into the tree, and the bunting departed.

In spite of the few available records, this bird probably should be considered an irregular visitor in Woodbury County. The summary of records, so far as I have them, is as follows: I have seen a mounted specimen of the Lark Bunting in the collection of A. J. Anderson. It was taken in Sioux City, near the present site of the Good Shepherd Home, on July 1, 1894. He saw a flock at that time. It is possible that this specimen is now in the Public Museum at Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Dr. Guy C. Rich gave me the measurements of a specimen collected either by him or for him on June 6, 1897, at Dorman's Crossing, in Sioux City. He also reported a field record for May 21, 1901, but I am not sure who made it. Dr. Rich also told me of a specimen of the "Lark Finch" on April 23, 1904, and a field record for April 26 by Lloyd Brown; but no record of either the Lark Bunting or the Lark Sparrow is included in the list of skins in the collection of the Brown Brothers, which I have. On June 2, 1921, A. J. Anderson saw a flock of six or seven Lark Buntings on the hills in Stone Park which he watched for several minutes, part of the time at a distance of 25 feet. He stated that this was his third record, the first being the 1894 record, as mentioned above; his second was a field record near Leeds (Woodbury County), for which I have no date.

The next record for Woodbury County was for May 17, 1925, and reported in the 'Wilson Bulletin' (Sept., 1925, p. 172) by T. M. Murdoch and W. W. Bennett. A. B. Darling reported the observation of a single Lark Bunting on June 5, 1927, along the road between Oto and Anthon, which was also published in the 'Wilson Bulletin' (Sept., 1927, p. 170).—T. C. STEPHENS, Sioux City, Iowa.

**The 'Iowa Conservationist'.**—In February of this year the Iowa State Conservation Commission began publishing an 8-page monthly leaflet under this title. It is edited by James R. Harlan, one of our former members. The purpose of the little magazine is to advance the cause of conservation in Iowa. Each issue is devoted to some phase of the Commission's work, such as game fish culture, game farming, wildlife feeding programs, state park recreational facilities, tree-planting, wild flower conservation, and so forth. The magazine is distributed free by the Iowa Conservation Commission, Des Moines, and the mailing list includes libraries, county and state officers, educators, newspapers and Iowa publications, and recreational organizations. It is nicely illustrated and well printed on enameled paper. Several of our ornithologist members have contributed to the magazine. In the March issue Bruce Stiles writes about "Kungovick, Blue Goose Migrant of the Midwest". Myrle Jones describes bird-banding methods in the May issue.

## NECROLOGY

**Jacob Hans Holck**, a Charter Member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, died at Spirit Lake, Iowa, January 5, 1942, following a long illness. He was born on April 8, 1872, in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, and came to this country with his parents in 1881. The family settled at Cherokee, Iowa, in 1887. In 1900 he was united in marriage to Miss Marie Henrickson of Sanborn, Iowa. They had one child, a daughter, Gertrude. Mr. Holck was engaged in the produce business at Peterson, Iowa, for many years. In 1935 he moved with his family to a resort near Spirit Lake where he became manager of a vacation camp. He was a lover of birds and flowers, a fact which prompted him to affiliate with our organization in its initial year. He also took much pleasure in fishing and was a great admirer of the lake region in which he spent most of his life. Burial was at Sanborn, Iowa.

**Fred Holland Hall**, president of the Hall-Ekfelt Furniture Co. and prominent in the business life of Ottumwa, Iowa, for 45 years, died at that city on February 22, 1942. A serious illness had confined him to his home since the previous September. He was born at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, on October 31, 1873, the son of Adina Brackett Hall and Emma Corinne Hall. He was educated at the Wellington, Kansas, high school and at a business college at Burlington, Iowa. In 1897 he married Miss Lucy C. Kirshbaum, and to them was born a daughter, Irane. Mr. Hall was active in business affairs, and was head of several furniture and jewelry firms in Ottumwa and other cities in Iowa. In civic life he was also prominent, and served on many boards of local community effort. He was particularly active in the local Rotary Club and Rotary International. Widely traveled, he attended Rotary meetings in Europe and South America. With Mrs. Hall he visited many interesting places on world tours. The study of outdoor life was a lifetime hobby, and in the field birds were his particular delight. He was a Charter Member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. Membership was also maintained in the Sky High Trail Hikers of the Canadian Rockies. His church affiliations were with the Congregational Church of Ottumwa. Burial was at Burlington, Iowa.

**Charles Warren Price**, who became a member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union in 1929, passed away at his home at Spirit Lake, Iowa, April 10, 1942. Born near Humboldt, Iowa, September 26, 1868, the son of William B. and Euphemia Price, his life was begun in the farming region of western Iowa, and he continued to live the rugged life of a farmer until he was 20 years old. When he was 14 he moved with his family to a farm near Spirit Lake, where he was attracted to the sport of fishing, a pastime which he followed actively during his entire life. He was a nature lover from early boyhood, and the lessons in nature lore and wildlife conservation that he taught his children and friends are cherished memories of the man. In 1890 Mr. Price married Miss Sarah Thomas. Their children were three daughters, Myrtle, Virginia and Mary, the last named now Mrs. F. L. R. Roberts who is well known in our organization. After leaving the farm, Mr. Price taught in a rural school for a year then entered the business world, first as manager of a lumber yard, later in real estate and insurance business, and serving 12 years as Recorder for Dickinson County. As Justice of the Peace he served the public long and faithfully, rounding out a term of 34 years of this work at the time of his death. An ardent supporter of all laws protecting fish and game, he was most happy when working with state conservation officers to protect Iowa's heritage of wildlife; his decisions as Justice were fair and respected. Public service also included terms as school board member, town assessor, two years as mayor of Spirit Lake, and aid in many civic projects. He

was a member of the Methodist Church. As a student of the history of the middle west, he built up one of the finest private libraries pertaining to this subject in Iowa, collecting many rare editions and copies autographed by authors. At our convention at Spirit Lake in 1939 Mr. Price appeared on the program with an interesting talk on the birds of the Iowa Great Lakes region in the earlier days.

#### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Bruce F. Stiles, well known to our organization as an ornithologist and writer, and a State Conservation Officer in the Council Bluffs territory for the past three years, was recently appointed Chief of the Fish and Game Division of the Iowa Conservation Commission. He has supervision of management and enforcement in the game and fisheries departments. His advancement to this important post came in recognition of the excellent work he did as a conservation officer. With his office now at Des Moines, he has moved to that city.

Our information on the military services of our members is as yet very meager. Dr. Thomas G. Scott, a reserve army officer, at this writing is stationed on the west coast. Robt. A. Pierce, of Nashua, was in camp on the east coast when last heard from. Howard Graesing, of Spirit Lake, has joined the army and is stationed at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. Dr. Robert Vane, of Cedar Rapids, enlisted in the navy.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Lambert, of Hampton, enjoyed a trip to Washington, D. C. and eastern points in April. On the way home they visited the Audubon Memorial State Park at Henderson, Kentucky, where a museum containing many Audubon relics is maintained within a park of much scenic beauty.

In the June, 1940, issue of 'Iowa Bird Life' Bruce Stiles described the nesting colony of Great Blue Herons on the Gifford estate, a tract of about 40 acres near Council Bluffs. This tract has been deeded to the State Conservation Commission by the heirs of Dr. Harold Gifford, Sr., to be "used, managed, and controlled by the State of Iowa and preserved insofar as possible exclusively as a wildlife sanctuary as long as such use is consistent with sound conservation practices, and thereafter devoted to any other proper conservation use."

The Editor of 'Iowa Bird Life' has several copies of R. M. Anderson's book on "Birds of Iowa" for disposal. Letters of inquiry should be sent to Winthrop, Iowa.

The following interesting item is an I.N.S. press release of February 4, 1942:

"Burlington, Iowa.—An original Elephant folio edition of four volumes of Audubon's 'Birds of America' brought \$15,600 in a New York auction at which the book collection of the late Judge James D. Smith of Burlington was sold, District Judge E. O. Newell, administrator of the estate, revealed Tuesday. The entire collection brought \$34,710 and included Gould's 'Humming Birds,' which sold for \$1,500. A buyer paid \$850 for a fourth edition of the Augsburg bible in German."

This issue of 'Iowa Bird Life' is printed in an edition of 550 copies, the largest edition we have had thus far.

**Junior Members.** The Constitution of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union as revised at the Waterloo convention creates a new class of membership—"Junior Member"—for young persons up to 15 years of age inclusive. When the age of 16 is reached Junior Members pass into the adult member group. Junior dues are 50c per year. We are ready to enroll young people in this class of membership and urge our older members to invite their young friends to join us. Junior Members receive 'Iowa Bird Life' regularly.